

# All Around Here: An Exagmination of Certain Locative Fictions and Plurilingual Works in Progress

Michael Joyce

Vassar College U.S.A.

---

## Abstract

This essay considers three recent works-in-progress combining augmented reality and other visual formats. Their genealogy is traced through predecessor texts from *Finnegans Wake* onward to recent explorations of mixed language or creolizations. Arguing that, in a global world, works of art, and especially literary works, must necessarily aspire to what the critic and theorist Brian Lennon has called “strong plurilingualism,” the essay explores possibilities for performative works, including locative fiction, visual representation, and augmented reality, which taken together conjure seamless experiences of joined differences not unlike plurilingual and creolized texts.

*Keywords:* augmented reality, creolization, digital literature, locative fiction, mixed language, plurilingualism.

---

Once upon a time the world was round and you could go on it around and around. Everywhere there was somewhere and everywhere there were men women children dogs cows wild pigs little rabbits cats lizards and animals. That is the way it was. And [ . . . ] all wanted to tell everybody all about it and they wanted to tell all about themselves.

—Gertrude Stein, *The World is Round* (1939)

In our time, questions of where and upon what we write take on a complexity perhaps unseen since the dawn of written literacy; now not simply the materiality of the writing surface but its temporal, spatial, and formal stability are not so much in question as again in play in the ways we make our marks both on and in the world. That the formulaic invocation with which the first sentence here begins, as with “in our time,” is itself elastic, extending back at least a century, I mean to signal, by presumptuously alluding in the title of this essay to the 1929 anthology *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress*, a symposium published in Paris by Eugene Jolas ten years before James Joyce’s work in progress *Finnegans Wake* appeared in full. It is arguable that the essays and the two “letters of protest” in “Our Exag”—as it was called at Shakespeare and Company according to Sylvia Beach’s introduction to the reprinted version in 1961—not only record the emergence of that work in progress as a variety of locative fiction, but also collect interactive responses in Paris and elsewhere among *l’iquipe* of those “followers of [the] new work as it progressed” (4). These followers, not yet known as Joyceans, have been, as Beach reports, “following it with excitement, though often losing their way in the dark of this night piece [ . . . ] They needed help” (4).

The presumptuousness of the particular Exag that follows below comes from the fact that the three works in progress here discussed are my own, although, to be sure, two of them are already highly collaborative and the remaining one will inevitably become so. But then so too the *Finnegans Wake* Exag is arguably equally self-reflexive and ultimately collaborative

since, in the first instance, it was long thought wrongly by Beach and others that Joyce himself contributed the one of the letters of protest attributed to Vladimir Dixon, but in any case Joyce, as he did with the Gilbert schema for *Ulysses*, fed intelligences about the work in progress and its schema to the interlocutors and commentators who contributed to the *Exagmination*.

The first of my three works in progress is a multiform poetical fiction, called *Arrondissementierès or A Round Here*, began while I was in residence as the Récollets laureate of the City of Paris/Institut Français in January and February 2013. It follows a series of linked characters, some fictional, some historical as they perambulate the *arrondissements* of Paris. The second, *The Surface of Water*, is a collaborative Augmented Reality blended panoramic narrative by Jay David Bolter, Maria Engberg, and myself designed for mobile AR (smart phone or tablet) that addresses the work and career of the Swedish painter Anders Zorn (1860-1920). The third, and most nascent, is “Fictional Encounters,” a collaboration among Alexandra Grant, the Los Angeles visual artist, Robert Nashak, a video game veteran and professor at USC’s School of Cinematic Arts, Lucas Kazansky, who works in augmented reality apps at DAQRI and has created the online graffiti app graxxer, and me. The project notes for Fictional Encounters describe it as “an interdisciplinary artwork that grows out of the human need to tell stories and associate, combining aspects of collaborative drawing projects, film-making, locative fiction, and augmented and alternative reality games” (Kazansky).

While it would be foolish to suggest that what drew me to and occupies me in these three projects offers a template for the future of any writing but my own, I do think these works raise questions related to where and upon what we write both on and in the world. Aside from the surnominal coincidence which might falsely seem to link works of a much lesser to the greatest Joyce, the latter’s *Finnegans Wake* does, I think, offer a working prototype for the temporal, spatial, and formal indeterminacy that is likely to continue to characterize digitality and inscription practices as writing surfaces; and written surfaces become increasingly wearable or, otherwise, materially integrated, physiologically implanted, locatively overlaid, virtually palimpsestic, and more and more quotidian and ubiquitous in unanticipated ways. Equally important, *Finnegans Wake* maps itself upon the dreamworld of night, of Ireland, of language itself in what Joyce, writing to Stefan Zweig, describes as “like a language which is above all languages” (Ellman 410). Language, such as viz., “Whagta kriowday!”<sup>1</sup> or FW233.32, is the kind of constantly exfoliating encoding that we have come to think of as creolization, the lingua franca of a networked and globalized world. My works in progress, likewise, proceed from work with creolized language, which each include critical aspects of what here are variously called creolized, macaronic, or mixed elements.

### About the Predecessor Works for my Three Current Works in Progress

A migratory creolization provides the narrative mode for my 2007 novel. *Was: Annales Nomadique: a Novel of Internet*, whose main character, as I describe for the jacket copy, is the

---

<sup>1</sup> See Karl Reisman’s article “‘Whagta Kriowday!’: Creole languages in *Finnegans Wake*.”

fleetingness of information itself. Its title figure, the word *was*, marks that instant of utterance outside the present, which is neither past nor future but rather the interstitial space of any telling. Within the novel, story begets story as if without author, events gathering into each other, as much memory as dream, generating their locales—and to some extent their languages, including snatches of French, Italian, Russian, Greek, and so on. Literally moving across the face of the globe by instant—continent to continent, from hemisphere to hemisphere—synaptic episodes strobe across the novel’s *surface* like thunderstorms seen from a satellite. Yet, in these brief flashes, a procession of characters passes before the reader in vignettes: lovers and children, parents and refugees, sailors, missionaries, mourners, forlorn warriors, sweet singers with the language taking on the qualities of each new locale.

The second predecessor work is my collection of poems, *Paris Views: Poems* (2012), which emerges from what I think of as a pianist’s finger exercises (but, a friend suggests, are simply attempts to learn French) during an autumn spent in Paris. These poetical sketches have quickly revealed themselves to me as a series of philosophical meditations in something nearer to a creole than Franglais, an attenuated mix of languages which I have thought of as mimicking the sort of tuning in and out one does—like scanning across radio frequencies—living in one and a half languages and a faraway, familiar city. My focus in that collection of poems becomes the infiltration and imbrication of place and language. In her cover blurb for Nathanaël’s (Nathalie Stephens) *Touch to Affliction* (2006), the poet and translator Cole Swensen has commented that Stephens “writes in both English and French, often using one to infiltrate the other, to crack the other open [such that] we sense the two languages passing each other, and as they do, a charge arcs from one to the other, making each stand out in sharp relief.” I would not presume to characterize myself as having truly written in two languages in *Paris Views*, but the poems there, nonetheless, share an affinity with Stephens’s kind of infiltrations and arcs—and, one hopes, her dense music as well. Happily Swensen herself seems to agree, writing in her cover blurb for *Paris Views* that in the book,

Paris is evoked not as objet d’art, but as sloppily, raucously, lived; as an idiosyncratic confluence of specific instances that shed deep light on the way that individual perception and experience sculpt public space. Throughout, [Joyce] makes the most of a delightful and visceral head-on collision of languages to construct a space between all utterance that is raw and always reaching out for its word—which, though not yet arrived, can be felt coming into being through that collision itself.

A like collision propelled my third, most recent and perhaps more radical predecessor text, the novel, *Foucault, in Winter, in the Linnaeus Garden: A Novel* (2014). Michèle Foucault famously notes in an interview that “I am fully aware that I have never written anything other than fictions” (75), and this novel takes the form of an historical fantasy consisting of letters, all imaginary and most of them unsent. Its story is set in Uppsala, Sweden, during three weeks of February 1956 when he was undergoing his first Swedish winter, having accepted a position as something of a cultural attaché and under the mistaken opinion that Lutheran Sweden was a country somehow friendlier toward homosexuals. The story unfolds during the brief time at the end of his love affair with the composer Jean Barraque after Foucault returns home to France over Christmas 1955 to try to convince Barraque to join him in Uppsala.

The novel takes place in the first weeks after he returns in February 1956, and before the relationship ends in March. It consists of a series of letters to Jean, to his mother, to a former colleague and mentor, whom he sometimes calls his former spouse, and, especially, to a gay young Swedish woman, Gabrielle. During his first months in Uppsala, Foucault develops a salon of sorts around him, begins serious research into his book on madness, and gives very successful lectures in Uppsala on sexuality in France. Thus many of these characters and situations, except those involving Gabriella, have their equivalents in historical events. The imagined intervention of Gabriella forms the core of my novel. The mixed (macaronic) language of the novel, a kind of English-French creole, with occasional Swedish words, is meant to create a kind of overtone like the droning of a *guimbarde* (jew's harp), keeping the realistic elements suspended. Even so, the French phrases and words of the novel hew closely enough to familiar English ones such that a casual reader, even without much familiarity with French, should have no trouble following the events.

### About Globalization/Localization in Mixed Language Works

As my work increasingly leads to these explorations of mixed language or creolizations, I become convinced that, in a global world, works of art, and especially literary works, must necessarily aspire to what the critic and theorist Brian Lennon has called “strong plurilingualism” (18), indeed moving toward what he identifies as “untranslatability [. . .] [in the] metastatic and liminal sense” (91). For Lennon, such works resist globalization insofar as their exchanges and transmissions present, in his words, “flows, simultaneities, networks, deterritorialization, annihilations of the space and time of representation” that escape understanding, becoming instead “a mode of incommensurability, of the incommensurable difference of languages, cultures, and forms of knowledge” (8). In short, not only do they embody the long realized paradoxes and secret soul of literary translations, but they also perform much as a city does, presenting inhabitants and visitors alike with compelling but fundamentally mysterious vistas and events, which visitor and inhabitant each understand differently.

To my mind, ubiquitous interfaces and modalities, such as Facebook and iPhone/Pad apps, increasingly take on aspects of a materialized lingua franca, seemingly delivered plurilingually. Against what might potentially seem a colonizing heterogeneity, the screen, the page, and the city each separately figures as a “structural border marking a space where plurilingual experience, including plurilingual writing, meets (or more often fails to meet) material [. . .] publication” (Lennon 153). Along this border, electronic and print forms of literature alike inevitably involve the kind of creolization that Elisabeth Kirndörfer, following Édouard Glissant's theory, herself plurilingually describes as “a circular process of the constant dissolution of more or less solid differences while creating new realities inscribed in time and space, manifesting itself in uncountable versions and facettes [sic]” (6-7).

### About the Versions, Facettes, and Title of “Arrondissementierès or A Round Here.”

On the one hand, *Arrondissementierès* can be seen as flowing from a variety of sources including the Situationist *dérive*, linked filmic narratives such as *Paris, Je T'Aime* (2006), and

augmented reality walking tours through mobile applications, such as “CultureClic.” However it is also a work that evolves from the predecessor texts in fiction and poetry, in which I have experimented with a kind of creolization that I have come to think of as “mixed language,” and whose nearest equivalent for me perhaps appears in Christine Brooke-Rose’s extraordinary novel, *Between* (1968), whose simultaneous translator heroine (code) switches among several languages without translation.

*Arrondissementierès* is very much a work in progress. During my time at Récollets, thanks to the generosity of La Mairie de Paris and l’Institut Français, I was able to complete both a detailed overall scenario as well as an initial first chapter of approximately eight thousand words, partly composed in the mixed language creole of my prior work. In addition, I was able to plot out detailed storyboards for the remaining twenty-plus chapters that will make up the dual rings (which I’m calling *Le Cercle Concentrique* and *Les branches de l’étoile dans le miroir à retournement temporel*) of the work. These storyboards, based upon my almost-daily flaneurist investigations of the arrondissements of the city, include identifying the specific quartiers and people each of the three main characters encounter in each of the thirty episodes. In some cases, my notes about these quartiers include a street-by-street choreography of the characters’ movements as well as descriptions of certain cafés, buildings, *vitrines*, parks, squares, and so on (with many of these notes reinforced by digital photos). All of these, of course, merely lay the groundwork for what I hope in time will become AR locative story elements. While I was able to physically visit each arrondissement (with repeated visits for those where I have fully-sketched storyboards), I was not able to complete storyboards for all before my residency concluded.

For *Arrondissementierès* I, likewise, envision exploring—albeit perhaps not in uncountable versions—both the permeable borders of what constitute contemporary Parisian arrondissements, their inhabitants, their flows, their histories, and their futures, and also the various overlays of representation available to represent them. Towards those ends, I hope to make *Arrondissementierès* available in at least four modes: locative stories presented via augmented reality, e-book versions, smartphone, and pad apps, and localized print on demand (POD) chapbooks.

The last of these, the print elements, are not meant to be merely nostalgic, but rather to offer a materiality of the kind that echoes and augments the inevitable—but almost unnoticed—accumulation of random scraps, souvenirs, programs, menus, and other paper artifacts that any traveler or tourist discovers at a journey’s end. My hope is to make POD chapbooks available in various locales in versions that might be thought of as localized publishing for localized stories. I envision that the particular chapter or section of the story for each arrondissement could be made available via print-on-demand technology in each of the respective *mairies*, local libraries, or some other bureau. Print-on-demand technology has, of course, matured to such an extent that it is possible with the right equipment to publish bound single copies of even a full-length book within minutes. Thus, for instance, my novel, *Disappearance* (2012) from Steerage Press, a start-up publisher in the U.S., is published both in remarkably inexpensive multiple e-book formats and also in a POD version as well—the latter available through Amazon or other online booksellers, and delivered to a would-be reader through the mail within days. In adapting the locative to the material, I would hope that each of the twenty-plus individual chapbook sections of *Arrondissementierès* would be

independently available only through the local POD outlet in the arrondissement. These would be special (modestly transmedial) forms, much in the spirit of the male and female versions of Milorad Pavić's *Dictionary of the Khazars: A Lexicon Novel* (1984) or the "negatives" of Stephen Hall's *Raw Shark Texts: A Novel* (2007). They would include an episode, or perhaps even a sub-plot, for each of the twenty arrondissements that would only be available in these POD chapbooks. That is, it would not be included as part of the Augmented Reality experience or the overall e-book, but, instead, would constitute a prize for the visitor engaged in a *chasse au trésor*.

As for the title of the work, the most obvious aspect of choosing an obscure French word, *arrondissementierès*—which has a sense with aspects of both ward-heeler and local cop—is that, as a locative fiction, its readers/visitors will in some sense vote (or devote) their preferences of attention in much the same way that residents of a quarter have chosen a place that suits their particular composition, histories, affiliations, and inclinations. The title takes the feminine form of the noun because my French has been bracketed by my experience of two women who weave a world of words, perhaps the best-known of the American expatriate writers and the doyenne of innovative writing in the U.S., Gertrude Stein and the extraordinary Hélène Cixous, whose fictions and visions of how writing and our locales form us, has sustained me through my writing life. Each one of them has given me—and continues to give me—a world around Paris, a round world of Paris, a way and a world to walk in and write about.

However, in titling the work so, I have resisted the temptation to indulge *dans un jeu de mots typiquement cixousien* by altering the word to *arrondissementeurs*, meaning overlaying the French word for liar, mostly because such an obvious transformation lacks the rich sense of invention of Cixous *mots-valeses* (to dare such a *jeu de mots* nonetheless), but, also, because *arrondissementierès* both in the political and surveillance senses of its etymology—as much as in its rhyme—inevitably summons intimations of lies and liars. The latter include those liars of the best kind, the ones that Stein summons in *A Novel of Thank You!* ([1925-26] 1958), where she writes (the syntax intentionally confusing even for a native English speaker) that "[t]here are two kinds of liars the kind that lie and the kind that don't lie the kind that lie are no good" (ch. CXCI). In *Arrondissementierès*, I intend to fashion stories of the kind that do not lie.

The other half of the title, *A Round Here*, of course, refers to the etymology of the French word *arrondissement* and the linguistic wheel and whirl it summons (especially for a Joyce and a Joycean) from the Latin *rota* turning to *rotare* and, thence, to the Old French *rond* coming—in Joyce's words, now twice—"by a commodious vicus of recirculation" to, but not ending with, the French *arrondir*. One wants to keep a sense of this free-wheeling through time and space and the languages that form them for us in the proposed work, giving it the rotational motion and paradoxical asymmetry of the actual arrondissements of Paris, while, at the same time, offering even the occasional tourist (that a round word as well) an experience not unlike the perambulations of that famous Irish Parisian, James Joyce's own "cultured allroundman" Leopold Bloom, the modern version of Ulysses as flaneur and *dériviste*.

## About the Blended Panoramic Narrative of The Surface of Water

Walking, dancing, pleasure: these accompany the poetic act. I wonder what kind of poet doesn't wear out their shoes, writes with their head. The true poet is a traveler. Poetry is about travelling on foot and all its substitutes, all forms of transportation. Mandelstam wore out hundreds of pairs of shoes. You cannot write such intense, dense poetry without the kind of dance that dances you around the world.

—Hélène Cixous, *Three Steps on the Ladder to Writing* (1995)

My collaborative work with imagetexts has taken on a new direction in “The Surface of Water” project. The Swedish painter Anders Zorn (1860-1920) has been significantly successful both in France, where he has received his training, and in the U.S. as well, where he has painted U.S. presidents and taught in St. Louis and at the Art Institute in Chicago. Together with Maria Engberg, of the Malmo University Department of Media Technology and Product Development, and my long-time collaborator and colleague, Jay David Bolter, Wesley Chair in New Media at the Georgia Institute of Technology, we are in the first phases of collaboration that involves locative storytelling via digital mobile media. Engberg has already worked with and led design projects using Augmented Reality (AR) in art historical settings—including a project regarding the cathedral at Metz—and is part of the City Fables project team at Malmo. Bolter, of course, is an internationally known figure in digital media design and media theoretical research.

Our preliminary work has been supported by a research residency grant at the Sigtuna Institute (Stockholm) from the Harald and Louise Ekman Research Foundation, during which we have created a prototype of a multimedia narrative based upon Zorn's life and works, with special focus in this first phase upon his U.S. and Stockholm experiences. Our goal for the initial Sigtuna research has been to begin to explore these possibilities through a mobile application that focuses on locative stories regarding Zorn's life and work. Today's mobile technology offers unique means to share text and images related to a specific GPS location, concretizing—but, also, in some cases, reopening scrutiny of—historical events through apps that in commercial applications are known as Mobile Augmented Reality.

While it has become increasingly common for such mobile apps to allow us to look for the nearest restaurant, for instance, or as with “CultureClic” to “access French museum data sheets, and even find out about cultural events” (“CultureClic”) by holding up a smartphone screen before the urban space around us, the Zorn project seeks, instead, to create an aesthetic AR app that puts the narrative rather than commercial information in focus. It also explores innovative uses of layered panoramas in locative (site-based) graphical representations and interfaces. Bolter—with whom I have developed the early, widely influential, pre-web hypertext application Storyspace in the 1980s—is co-director of Georgia Tech's Augmented Environments Lab, which has developed Argon, a free, open-source platform for augmented reality applications. Using this multi-media, site-specific platform for the iPhone and Android, we have begun to integrate stories, illustrations, and anecdotes from Zorn's personal history that will give the user of our AR application an experience that combines audio, video, and text within the actual settings of Zorn's life and work. The website for our project describes it as follows:

*The Surface of Water* is an Augmented Reality blended panoramic narrative, created for mobile AR (smart phone or tablet). Using 360° panoramas as background, the narrative segments are displayed as text or played as recorded audio. *The Surface of Water* is a location-based experience. The audience interacts with the panorama narratives by accessing them at particular sites in Sweden, France, Italy and the United States, although the panoramic form also permits the audience to experience a satisfying form of the work remotely. (“Panorama Narrative Project”)

For me the narrative questions concern how to render the multiplicity (and buffer the shock) of such multiform life, finding characters and episodes that highlight Zorn’s extraordinary network and international experiences—dimensions of his life that, in Sweden, are often lost in the prevailing national myth of the illegitimate boy from the countryside who became the great artist—while at the same time immersing the visitor in the actual places once inhabited, drawn, and painted by Zorn. During the research residency, I was able to craft the first two such narrative monologues for the project and since then we have added a third, recording all three with professional actors here and in Sweden. On the project website, Engberg describes our method as one “of fusing, an interweaving of different verbal, visual, and sonic languages. In the texts English, Swedish, and French are braided, making a macaronic poetic language that allows individual voices from Zorn’s life to speak” (“Panorama Narrative Project”).

The interwoven and braided fusings of the work extend to its presentation media and encodings, including that encoding which comprises my narrative monologues:

The multimodal panoramas are created with 360deg; photography, representations of Zorn’s paintings, historical photographs, and site-specific sounds. We have blended nature painting, impressionistically treated landscape panoramas, and black-and-white documentation photography, blending the “here and now” with the “there and then.” Some of our techniques of blending (e.g. macaronic poetry, the fusing of photography and painting) are centuries or decades old. Augmented Reality allows us to recontextualize these older techniques and to add new layers to the blend: location- awareness and interactive visualization.

The technical/material support for our project is provided by Argon, a so-called “Augmented Reality browser,” created at Georgia Tech’s Augmented Environments Lab (<http://ael.gatech.edu>) Argon allows us to incorporate 360° panoramas as well as video and sound into an interactive experience. On the phone’s screen, the user can see only a portion of the panorama at any one time; she pans up-down and left-right to examine in its entirety the image that surrounds her. Audio plays while the user explores, and the panorama itself may be morphing at the same time. The user’s gestures add a tactile component to the textual, aural and visual blending that constitute *The Surface of Water*. (“Panorama Narrative Project”)

The questions before us in the next stages of the project include considering how mobile technologies change our approach to, and understanding of, literature and history; as well as how such literary and historical representations can compete with commercial applications that not only change how we experience urban space but also increasingly cover it with digital information in a fashion that threatens to recapitulate in virtual space the scourge of posters that afflicted Paris in 1900. About the latter, Maurice Talmeyr’s complaint in *La Cité du Sang* (1901) surely rings true for those feeling increasingly oppressed by cascading social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and the like to which AR would add another layer: “These [poster]



images of a day or an hour, bleached by the elements, charcoaled by urchins, scorched by the sun—although others are sometimes collected even before they have dried—symbolize to a higher degree even than the newspapers the sudden, shock-filled, multiform life that carries us away” (269).

### About the Accretive, Participatory Artwork of “Fictional Encounters”

At the time of this writing, the website for “Fictional Encounters” is under construction and the project is still in the proposal stage and seeking funders and venues. Yet, even in the proposal there already resides a great deal of accumulated energy, a kind of prospective potentiality and convergence that, I think, characterizes the marshaling and making of what the proposal calls “a living artwork [whose] material aspects of Fictional Encounters are themselves under investigation.” Conceived as a collaborative and participatory art project using the idea of romantic “missed connections” to generate new visual art forms, locative writing, and an archive of viewers’ experiences in both the real and online worlds, the project envisions a portal to connect participants globally and thus will be inevitably plurilingual, macaronic, and creolized. The project span encompasses a period of two years, beginning with the development and launch of the website and culminating in the display of media created by the participants—online and off—to be installed at two or more gallery spaces.

We anticipate that the portal will resemble the “missed connections” section of Craigslist or the back page of the *Village Voice*, with news postings intended on undoing missed opportunities for connection. For the postings, Alexandra Grant and I will create stories and characters for the public to fantasize about, reflect on and respond to, while Robert Nashak will develop tools to visualize and archive these imaginary and real encounters over time, allowing viewers to interact with each other and upload their own media, and Kazansky will develop mobile and online tools that allow viewers to leave traces both online and in real-life locations that other participants can encounter and interact with. The conjunction of digital arts across space and time—of individual experiential structures together generating a fundamentally unified visual, spatial, temporal, and sensorial experience—is thus meant to connect disconnections, which would otherwise be “missed.” Grant describes the project in terms of what she sees as “a living, multivalent painting”:

Fictional Encounters builds upon my most recent collaborative and participatory project, *Forêt Intérieure/Interior Forest*, where the public was invited to come and draw a single work of fiction, French philosopher Hélène Cixous’s book, *Philippines*. What resulted were two-large scale drawings and installations in both Los Angeles and Paris in 2013, with over 500 named participants. [In Fictional Encounters] participants from across the world will be invited to explore the site and add their own images, voices and avatars . . . [in] a safe and unorthodox space to experiment with expressions of identity and sexuality, connect with each others’ known and unknown in real and virtual forms, and create a collective, synthetic artwork where no single author is privileged.

Much like Grant’s collaborative project *Forêt Intérieure/Interior Forest*, our *Fictional Encounters* projects intend to render shared space between people linked in their disconnected interconnectedness, collectively juxtaposing physical, technological, and mental presence

synthesized fluidly through locative fiction, visual representations, and augmented reality. Taken together we hope these performative works will conjure seamless experiences of joined differences not unlike plurilingual and creolized texts.

### About the Macaronic, Creolized, Mixed, and Queer Qualities of Plurilingual Writing

The succession of terms that I have offered in this essay to describe the overlaid and compounded forms of hybridized writing and artwork presented by my works-in-progress perhaps offer a self-evident demonstration of shifting landscapes confronting any writer (not to mention readers) faced with contemporary digital forms. Jillana B. Enteen situates digital creolization within the rubric of queer studies, defining it as “the adaptation and amalgamation of English-language terms in online spaces that intentionally modifies prior meanings in order to serve alternative, and often subversive, purposes” (4), locating these prior meanings as “rehearsed in formulations of nation, gender and/or sexuality in or regarding computer mediated technologies” (8). Just as Brian Lennon argues that plurilingual works resist globalization via their “mode of incommensurability” (8), Enteen marshals instances where “subjects use electronic media to resist popular understandings of cyberspace, computer-mediated communication, nation, and community, presenting unexpected responses to the forces of globalization and predominate U.S. value systems” (i).

However, not merely languages—and, to be sure, not merely English terms—but digital forms themselves, are increasingly—perhaps inherently—creolized. Engberg’s description of *The Surface of Water* as a “fusing [and] interweaving of different verbal, visual, and sonic languages” speaks beyond the surface of the text to its layered modes of presentation, which, of course, in digital literature are inextricably linked. Likewise, Grant’s formulation of “Fictional Encounters” as “creat[ing] a collective, synthetic artwork where no single author is privileged” can (and should) be extended to describing a project in which no single modality is privileged among “tools to visualize and archive these imaginary and real encounters over time” and “allow viewers to leave traces both online and in real-life locations.” The written word is only once such a tool, leaving only one set of traces.

Social networking, transmedia, as well as contemporary forms of programming such as “agile,” “extreme,” “scrum,” and other app development processes, not only privilege works-in-progress, but in some profound sense have accustomed us to thinking that works in progress never end, thus making them works in *process*. This is to say that contemporary media objects and complexes are subject to much the same transformations that creolization—literally—performs upon language itself, making it contingent, provisional, exploratory, processual, and actively performative. These newly creolized digital/social/material/processual forms again bring to mind Kirndörfer’s characterization of Glissant’s “circular process of the constant dissolution of more or less solid differences while creating new realities inscribed in time and space” (6-7).

For a writer approaching the dawn of his eighth decade upon this earth, the notion of new realities inscribed in time and space has a particular tang. Meanwhile, enough years of involvement with digital media projects inure one to the reality that, for various reasons, they often do not get out of alpha. Funding fails to develop, collaborators move on to other interests, or more seductive modalities and technologies lap the field. But these, of course, stand as

surrogate for something else. Indeed, Cixous writes of James Joyce that he “finds his place in movement, in a perpetual ‘progress’ which seeks no end because the only end is death and every halt an image of death. The ‘progress,’ in the sense of projection towards the future, is active, is work. One must create and not let oneself be moulded [. . .] there are breaks [. . .] but essentially it is a continuity. No one can stop Joyce from living and creating, except himself.” (*The Exile of James Joyce* 17).

### Works Cited

- Beach, Sylvia. Preface. *Our Exagmination Round His Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress*. 2nd ed. Ed. Samuel Beckett, Marcel Brion et al. New York: New Directions Publishing, 1962. Print.
- Bolter, Jay David, Maria Engberg, and Michael Joyce. “Panorama Narrative Project: ‘The Surface of Water: Worlds of Anders Zorn’.” *Farneardotnet*. Jay David Bolter and Maria Engberg, 6 Oct. 2012. Web. 12 Oct. 2015.
- Brooke-Rose, Christine. *Between*. London: Joseph, 1968. Print.
- Cixous, Hélène. *Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing*. Trans. Sarah Cornell and Susan Summers. New York: Columbia University Press, 1993. Print.
- . *The Exile of James Joyce*. Trans. Sally A. J. Purcell. New York: David Lewis, 1972. Print.
- “CultureClic Augmented Culture for iPhone, Smartphones & 80% of Connected Mobiles (Augmented Reality).” *YouTube.com*. YouTube, LLC, 25 Feb. 2010. Web. 12 Oct. 2015.
- Ellman, Richard. *James Joyce*. 1959. Rev. ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982. Print.
- Enteen, Jillana B. *Virtual English: Queer Internets and Digital Creolization*. London: Routledge, 2010. Print.
- Grant, Alexandra. “*Forêt Intérieure/Interior Forest*.” *Alexandragrant.com*. AlexandraGrant, 2013. Web. 12 Oct. 2015.
- Hall, Steven. *The Raw Shark Texts: A Novel*. 2007. Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 2008. Print.
- Joyce, James. *Ulysses*. Paris: Shakespeare, 1922. Print.
- . *Finnegans Wake*. New York: Viking Press, 1957. Print.
- Joyce, Michael. *Foucault, in Winter, in the Linneaus Garden: A Novel*. Buffalo: Starcherone Press, 2014. Print.
- . *Disappearance*. Boulder; Colorado; Normal, Illinois: Steerage Press, 2012. Print.
- . *Paris Views: Poems*. Buffalo, NY: BlazeVOX [Books], 2012. Print.
- . *Was: Annales Nomadique/A Novel of Internet*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2007. Print.
- Kazansky, Lucas. “graxxer.” *Vimeo.com*. Vimeo LLC, 2014. Web. 12 Oct. 2015.
- Kirndörfer, Elisabeth. *Analysis and Discussion of the Concept of “Creolization” with Focus on Edouard Glissant*. 2009. PDF file. Istanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Faculty of Political Science/International Relations Seminar: Europe and Migration. Web. 12 Oct. 2015.
- Lennon, Brian. *In Babel’s Shadow: Multilingual Literatures, Monolingual States*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. Print.
- Nathanaël. *Touch to Affliction/Nathalie Stephens*. Toronto: Coach House Books, 2006. Print.

- Paris, Je T'Aime*. Dir. Olivier Assayas, Frederic Auburtin et. al. France: Victoires International, Pirol Stiftung, Filmazure, Canal+, Arrival Cinema LLC, X-Filme Creative Pool, 2006.
- Pavic, Milorad. *Dictionary of the Khazars: A Lexicon Novel*. 1984. New York: Knopf, 1988. Print.
- Reisman, Karl. “ ‘Whagta Kriowday!’: Creole languages in *Finnegans Wake*.” 1981. *Fadograph's Weblog*. N.p., 2008. Web. 12 Oct. 2015.
- Stein, Gertrude. *A Novel of Thank You!* 1925. Normal, Illinois: Dalkey Archive Press, 1994. Print.
- . *The World is Round*. 1939. Boston: Barefoot Books, 1993. Print.
- Talmeyr, Maurice. *La Cité du Sang: Tableaux du Siecle Passe*. Paris: Perrin et Cie, Libraires-Editeur, 1901. Print.